**Hector, King of the Barnyard**

*By Richard Woodard and Illustrated by Joe Kulka*



Hector was a proud rooster. He ruled the chicken coop. He was the first to rise. He got the sun out of its bed in the morning. He got the chickens out to look for food. He kept them safe from the fox.

"Isn't he handsome?" said the hens.

"And what a beautiful voice."

"He's so brave and strong."

"I always feel safe when Hector is around."

Hector strutted around the yard. Nothing missed his gaze. He was everything a chicken king should be.

But one day Hector looked out on the farm beyond the hen yard. It bothered him to see the pigs and cows without a leader. He decided to make himself their king, too.

Hector flew to the pigpen. Not one pig was digging for worms. They just slept in the shade or wallowed in the mud.

"Get up!" he crowed. "I've come to be your king!"

The pigs looked up and scratched their heads. Then they went back to sleep.

"Lazy loafers!" Hector yelled. "It's time to look for food."

One pig got up and walked over to the trough. "Where's the food?" he said. "Bring us a lot of food, and you can be our king."

Hector shook his head. "I could never find enough food to feed those lazy pigs," he thought. "They should find their own food, like respectable hens."

He looked over at the field where the cows were grazing. "That's more like it," he said. "See how they move around looking for their own food. I'll be their king."

He flew over to the cows. "Good, good," he said. "Heads low, eyes open, dig if you must."

But as he watched the cows, Hector was amazed to see that they just ate the grass and missed all the bugs. "Faster now," he called out to them. "You eat too slow. They're getting away."

Hector flew down to the ground and gobbled up a couple of juicy grasshoppers to show the cows how to do it. "Now you try," he said.

One of the cows looked at Hector and said, "We don't eat bugs. We just eat the grass."

"The pigs are too lazy, and the cows don't know what's good to eat," Hector complained. "How can I be king to creatures like this?"

A horse that was grazing nearby stopped to listen to Hector. "What a silly rooster," thought the horse.

Back at the chicken yard the hens were worried. The fox could be around. Where was their king and protector?

One hen clucked a worried cluck. Another hen joined in. Pretty soon the yard was full of worried, clucking chickens.

"Is that the hens?" the horse asked Hector.

"Has the fox gotten into the chicken yard? Too bad they don't have a king."

Hector screamed an alarm. He flew past the cows and past the pigpen. He landed in the chicken yard, kicking up dust and scattering hens, looking everywhere for the fox.

"Our king is back!" squawked a hen.

Hector paraded around the yard as the hens settled down to scratch for bugs. "This is more like it," he said. "The rest of the animals will have to find another king."

1. Read these sentences from the story.

**Back at the chicken yard the hens were worried. The fox could be around. Where was their king and protector?**

What is the meaning of the word *protector* as used in the sentence above?

1. one who attacks
2. one who promises to play
3. one who keeps others from harm
4. one who makes things uncomfortable
5. Read the following sentences from the story.

**“Lazy loafers!” Hector yelled. “It’s time to look for food.”**

Using the second illustration and the story, what does the word *loafers* mean?

1. to avoid work
2. to sleep noisily
3. to hunt quickly
4. to wander around
5. Read the following sentences from the story.

**“He’s so brave and strong.” “I always feel safe when Hector is around.”**

Which word has the OPPOSITE meaning of the word *brave*?

1. cowardly
2. daring
3. fearless
4. handsome
5. Read the following sentences from the story.

**Hector flew into the pigpen. Not one pig was digging for worms. They just slept in the shade or wallowed in the mud.**

Which word has the SAME meaning as the word *wallowed*?

1. avoided
2. ignored
3. rolled
4. tossed
5. Which pair of words from the story has almost the SAME meaning?
6. proud, worried
7. respectable, lazy
8. strutted, paraded
9. amazed, bothered
10. What is the MOST LIKELY reason the author wrote the story “Hector, King of the Barnyard”?
11. to explain about a rooster trying to make friends
12. to tell about a rooster who wants to feel important
13. to describe how a rooster teaches others to find food
14. to share how a rooster tries to keep other animals from harm
15. Which of the following events happens AFTER the yard is full of worried clucking chickens?
16. Hector visits the cows.
17. Hector screams an alarm.
18. Hector goes into the pigpen.
19. Hector parades around the yard.
20. At the end of the story, why do the hens start clucking?
21. The hens are trying to get attention.
22. The hens are worried that the horse will hurt Hector.
23. The hens realize that the pigs were not digging for worms.
24. The hens were amazed that the cows were not eating the bugs.
25. Read the sentence from the story.

**“They should find their own food like respectable hens.”**

If *respect* means “proper”, what does *respectable* mean?

1. one who is proper
2. without being proper
3. in a way that is proper
4. capable of being proper
5. Which word best describes Hector in this story?
6. bossy
7. fair
8. shy
9. weak

Answer Key

1. Correct Answer C, DOK 2 (1.6.3)
2. Correct Answer A, DOK 3 (1.6.3)
3. Correct Answer A, DOK 2 (1.6.8)
4. Correct Answer C, DOK 2 (1.6.8)
5. Correct Answer C, DOK 3 (1.6.8)
6. Correct Answer B, DOK 2
7. Correct Answer B, DOK 1
8. Correct Answer A, DOK 2
9. Correct Answer D, DOK 3
10. Correct Answer A, DOK 2